Tips for Safe Surfing

Chat Rooms

Chat rooms may seem like a great way to meet new people. But remember:

- You never know who is there.
- People you meet online are not always who they seem to be.
- Nothing you type is private, so never give out any personal information.

E-mail

E-mail makes it easy to stay in touch with friends. But to play it safe:

- It's best not to respond to an e-mail from someone you don't know.
- Don't open files attached to e-mails from someone you don't know.

Exploring the Web

The Internet is a great place to do research for school, shop, and learn more about your hobbies. But for your safety and privacy:

- Avoid "adults only" Web sites and If you encounter adult material, leave the site immediately.
- If you go to a Web site that requires you to provide personal information to gain access, ask your parents first.
- Get a parent's permission before buying anything online.

Talk to a parent or other trusted adult about any information, images, or contact you encounter that makes you feel uncomfortable or seems inappropriate.

Test your Internet Safety IQ!

- A girl you met in a teen chat room wants you to send her your picture. Is it okay to send it since she's your age?

No. Never assume that someone you meet online is who he or she claims to be. Sometimes adults will lie about who they are to get kids to talk to them.

- Someone you met online wants to send you a free CD. Is it okay to just give him your mailing address?

No. Never give out identifying information such as your name, address, school name, or phone number.

- You've been e-mailing this guy for a while and he wants to meet you at the mall after school. Is it okay since it's a public place?

No. Never arrange a face-to-face meeting with someone you've met online, even in a public place, unless a parent goes with you.

- Someone sent you an e-mail with some files attached. Is it okay to download them?

No. Never download files from an unknown source. They could contain inappropriate material or a computer virus.

- Some guy sent you a threatening e-mail. Should you e-mail him back and tell him to leave you alone?

No. Never respond to messages that are suggestive, obscene, or harassing. Tell your parents instead.

- Someone sent you some pictures that make you feel uncomfortable. Should you just delete them?

No. Never delete them without telling your parents first.

- You and your friends are creating your own web page. Is it okay to post your pictures?

No. Never post pictures of yourself or list any identifying information.